

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1.-5. (Canceled).

6. (Currently Amended) An information processing system, comprising:
a first computing device configured to:

receive a request packet originating from a client, the request packet including an identifier;

in response to the request packet, identify a computing device that is associated with the identifier;

when the identified computing device is the first computing device, perform an operation of ~~an~~ a first application in response to the request packet; and

when the identified computing device is a second computing device, output ~~the request~~ a second packet to the second computing device for performing the operation of the first application in response to the ~~request packet~~. second packet, the second packet including a reference to a data structure of a connection with the client, the reference to the data structure being included within a single header of the second packet.

7. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 6 wherein the identifier is a session identifier.

8. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 7 wherein the session identifier is an HTTP session identifier.

9. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 6 wherein the identifier is a URL identifier.

10. (Previously Presented) The system of claim 6 wherein the identifier is an SSL identifier.

11.-15. (Canceled).

16. (Currently Amended) A method performed by a first computing device of an information processing system, the method comprising:

receiving a request packet originating from a client, the request packet including an identifier;

in response to the request packet, identifying a computing device that is associated with the identifier;

when the identified computing device is the first computing device, performing an operation of ~~an~~ a first application in response to the request packet; and

when the identified computing device is a second computing device, outputting ~~the request~~ a second packet to the second computing device for performing the operation of the first application in response to ~~the request packet~~. second packet, the second packet including a reference to a data structure of a connection with the client, the reference to the data structure being included within a single header of the second packet.

17. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the identifier is a session identifier.

18. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 17 wherein the session identifier is an HTTP session identifier.

19. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the identifier is a URL identifier.

20. (Previously Presented) The method of claim 16 wherein the identifier is an SSL identifier.

21. (Currently Amended) A computer-readable ~~signal-bearing~~ storage medium containing ~~contents~~ instructions that cause a first computing device of an information processing system to perform a method comprising:

receiving a request packet originating from a client, the request packet including an identifier;

in response to the request packet, identifying a computing device that is associated with the identifier;

when the identified computing device is the first computing device, performing an operation of an application in response to the request packet; and

when the identified computing device is a second computing device, outputting ~~the request~~ a second packet to the second computing device for performing the operation in response to the ~~request packet~~ second packet, the second packet containing a reference to a data structure of a connection with the client, the reference to the data structure being included within a single header of the second packet.

22. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable ~~signal-bearing~~ storage medium of claim 21 wherein the identifier is a session identifier.

23. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable ~~signal-bearing~~ storage medium of claim 22 wherein the session identifier is an HTTP session identifier.

24. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable ~~signal-bearing~~ storage medium of claim 21 wherein the identifier is a URL identifier.

25. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable ~~signal-bearing-storage~~ medium of claim 21 wherein the identifier is an SSL identifier.

26. (Currently Amended) The computer-readable ~~signal-bearing-storage~~ medium of claim 21 wherein the computer-readable ~~signal-bearing-storage~~ medium is a memory of a computing device.

27.-28. (Canceled).

29. (New) The system of claim 6 wherein the first computing device is configured to identify the computing device associated with the identifier by determining whether the computing device stores the data structure of the connection with the client.

30. (New) The system of claim 6 wherein the second packet includes the request packet.

31. (New) The system of claim 6 wherein the reference to the data structure includes an IP address of the client, a port of a second application executed by the client, an IP address of the second computing device, and a port of the first application executed by the second computing device.

32. (New) The system of claim 31 wherein the port of the application executed by the second computing device is a TCP port.

33. (New) The system of claim 31 wherein the port of the application executed by the second computing device is a UDP port.

34. (New) The system of claim 6 wherein the first computing device is configured to receive the request packet through a global computer network.

35. (New) The system of claim 34 wherein the first computing device is configured to:

when the identified computing device is the second computing device, output the second information packet to the second computing device through a local area network.

36. (New) The system of claim 6 wherein the first application is a socket-based application.

37. (New) The system of claim 6 wherein the first computing device comprises a network interface card.

38. (New) The system of claim 6 wherein the first and second computing devices are servers in a server farm.

39. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein identifying the computing device associated with the identifier comprising determining whether the computing device stores the data structure of the connection with the client.

40. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the second packet includes the request packet.

41. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the reference to the data structure includes an IP address of the client, a port of a second application executed by the client, an IP address of the second computing device, and a port of the first application executed by the second computing device.

42. (New) The method of claim 41 wherein the port of the application executed by the second computing device is a TCP port.

43. (New) The method of claim 41 wherein the port of the application executed by the second computing device is a UDP port.

44. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the method comprises receiving the request packet through a global computer network.

45. (New) The method of claim 44 wherein the method comprises:
when the identified computing device is the second computing device, outputting the second information packet to the second computing device through a local area network.

46. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the first application is a socket-based application.

47. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the first computing device comprises a network interface card.

48. (New) The method of claim 16 wherein the first computing device is a first destination server in a server farm and the second computing device is a second destination server in the server farm.

49. (New) The method of claim 48 wherein the method comprises:
receiving the request packet from the client through a first network;
when the identified device is the first server, performing the operation of the first application in response to the first information packet comprises executing, by the first server, a server application associated with the received packet; and
when the identified computing device is the second server, outputting the second information packet to the second computing device comprises:
generating the second packet; and

forwarding the second packet to the second server through a second network.

50. (New) An information processing system, comprising:

a first computing device comprising:

means for receiving a first information packet originating from a client;

means for responding to the first information packet by identifying a computing device that stores a data structure of a connection with the client;

means for selectively performing an operation of a server application configured to perform the operation when the identified computing device is the first computing device; and

means for selectively outputting a second information packet to a second computing device configured to output the second information packet to the second computing device when the identified computing device is the second computing device, wherein the second computing device is configured to perform the operation in response to the second information packet, the second information packet including a reference to the data structure, the reference being included within a single header of the second information packet.

51. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein the second information packet includes the first information packet.

52. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein the reference includes an IP address of the client, a port of a second application executed by the client, an IP address of the second computing device, and a port of the first application executed by the second computing device.

53. (New) The system of claim 52 wherein the port of the first application is a TCP port.

54. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein the means for receiving is configured to receive the first information packet through a global computer network.

55. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein the means for selectively outputting is configured to:

when the identified computing device is a second computing device, output the second information packet to the second computing device through a local area network.

56. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein the server application is a socket-based application.

57. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein the first computing device comprises a network interface card.

58. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein the first information packet is addressed by the client to the first computing device, and wherein the means for receiving is configured to receive the first information packet in response to the addressing.

59. (New) The system of claim 50 wherein the first computing device and the second computing device are servers in a server farm.

60. (New) A computer-readable storage medium containing instructions to cause a first computing device to process information, by performing a method comprising:

receiving a first information packet originating from a client;

in response to the first information packet, identifying a computing device that stores a data structure of a connection with the client;

when the identified computing device is the first computing device, performing an operation of a server application in response to the first information packet; and

when the identified computing device is a second computing device, outputting a second information packet to the second computing device, wherein the second computing device is configured to perform the operation in response to the second information packet, the second information packet including a reference to the data structure, the reference being included within a single header of the second information packet.

61. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 60 wherein the second information packet includes the first information packet.

62. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 60 wherein the reference includes an IP address of the client, a port of a second application executed by the client, an IP address of the second computing device, and a port of the first application executed by the second computing device.

63. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 62 wherein the port of the first application is a TCP port.

64. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 60 wherein the computer-readable medium is a memory of a computer device.

65. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 60 wherein the first information packet is received through a global computer network.

66. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 60 wherein the application is a socket-based application.

67. (New) The computer-readable storage medium of claim 60 wherein the first computing device comprises a network interface card.